

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors of Special Education and Pupil Services

FROM: George P. Dowaliby, Chief, Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services

SUBJECT: Time with Non-Disabled Peers (TWNDP) Data Collection – Community-Based Job Placements and in Regular Education Classroom Settings.

DATE: December 18, 2002

This memorandum is to serve as clarification regarding how your district should count hours as “TWNDP” as it relates to the participation of students with disabilities in job placements, and other community-based training opportunities and in regular classroom settings.

JOB TRAINING/COMMUNITY-BASED SETTINGS

The federal definition of “regular education” includes the following:

“... age-appropriate community-based settings that include individuals with and without disabilities, such as college campuses or vocational sites...” (OSEP IDEA, Part B Data Dictionary – October 2002).

When determining if such community-based job placements or skills training programs should count as TWNDP, all of the following apply:

- The job placement occurs in an inclusive setting where individuals with and without disabilities are present. Think about the “look around” rule – when you are in the setting in which the student is being educated, “look around” to see if there are individuals without disabilities present;
- The job experience is one at which any student could potentially work;
- It is not a job placement that has been designed **just** for students with disabilities; and
- The community-based job placement and/or skills training program is part of the student’s educational program (i.e. not just an after-school job).

Examples of age-appropriate community-based job placements that would meet the criteria to be counted as “TWNDP”, based on the above criteria, would include the following:

- Individual job sites, on a regular and consistent basis, with or without a job coach, that includes individuals without disabilities;
- In-school job sites, on a regular and consistent basis, with or without a job coach, that includes individuals without disabilities; and/or

- A work crew or enclave where a group of students may go to one job site, but each student works in different jobs within that one site (i.e., the job site may be at a grocery store, four students go at one time, supervised by a job coach, but each student is working in a different part of the store, with individuals without disabilities).

Examples of community-based experiences that would **not** meet the criteria to be counted as TWNDP would include the following:

- Sheltered employment of any kind;
- Periodic “field trips” for the purpose of one-time job shadowing or visits to businesses;
- Work crews or enclaves where a group of students complete work in a separate room or setting and there is no meaningful presence of individuals without disabilities;
- Work crews or enclaves where students participate in jobs such as maintenance/grounds keeping etc., but the work occurs after business/company hours and there is no meaningful presence of individuals without disabilities; and/or
- Periodic “field trips” to the community to conduct independent living activities.

REGULAR EDUCATION CLASSES

For the purposes of determining a student’s “Time with Non-Disabled Peers” in schools, one would also apply the “look-around” rule – when you are in the setting in which the student is being educated, “look around” to see if there are students with disabilities; (that is, students who are requiring specially designed instruction in that setting), being educated with individuals without disabilities.

A “regular education classroom”:

- is taught by a general education teacher;
- is identified in a course catalogue as a general education class; and
- contains a substantial number of non-disabled students.

Please note that “Time with Non-Disabled Peers” is different than “Hours of Special Education Instruction”. For example, it is possible that a student can spend 100% of his/her time receiving Special Education instruction, and can simultaneously be in a regular classroom whereby the same 100% of his/her time is with non-disabled peers.

Examples of a “regular education classroom” would include the following:

- A general education 3rd grade class;
- A co-taught class with a substantial number of non-disabled peers on the classroom roster; and/or

- Lunch, recess and other non-academic time during the school day where students with disabilities are included with other age appropriate classes.

Examples of a “regular education classroom” would **not** include the following:

- an art class taught by the art teacher, where the students in the class are all students with disabilities from the school’s self-contained class;
- a special education resource room; or
- a special education classroom where non-disabled peers visit and/or “peer-tutor” students with disabilities on a regular basis.

If you have any questions re. TWNDP as it relates to job placements or community-based settings please contact Patricia Anderson at (860) 713-6923 or patricia.anderson@ct.gov.

*If you have any questions re. TWNDP as it relates to regular education classes, please contact Deb Richards at (860) 713-6925 at or deborah.richards@po.state.ct.us.

***Updated Contact Information**

If you have any questions re. TWNDP as it relates to regular education classes, please contact Rhonda Kempton at (860) 713-6924 at or Rhonda.kempton@ct.gov.